



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
Great Government Through the General Management System – Quality, Timeliness, Value
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

CLASS SPECIFICATION

CLASSIFIED

AGRICULTURAL CIVIL ACTIONS INVESTIGATOR

Class No. 003940

■ CLASSIFICATION PURPOSE

To review violations of agricultural, weights, and measures regulations; provide information during departmental administrative hearings; and to perform related work as required.

■ DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

This is a one-position class allocated only to the Department of Agricultural, Weights, and Measures (AWM). The Agricultural Civil Actions advocate reports to the County Commissioner of Agriculture, Weights, and Measures, and is responsible for reviewing violations of AWM rules and regulations, conducting pre-filing conferences with defendants, and providing advocacy for the department during administrative hearings.

■ FUNCTIONS

The examples of functions listed in the class specification are representative but not necessarily exhaustive or descriptive of any one position in the class. Management is not precluded from assigning other related functions not listed herein if such duties are a logical assignment for the position.

Essential Functions:

1. Reviews potential and confirmed violations of State and Federal laws, regulations, and ordinances governing AWM enforcement to determine the sufficiency of information and probability of successful administrative or legal action against defendants.
2. Reviews defendants' records, permits, violation history, and other data and prepares evidence for administrative hearings.
3. Communicates corrective actions or refers defendants to technical staff.
4. Recommends violation penalties or results of stipulations.
5. Exchanges information with county staff, courts, and representatives from outside agencies and interprets departmental policy, procedures, rules and regulations.
6. Drafts notices of proposed action, court warrants, subpoenas, and other legal documents.
7. Attends administrative, criminal and civil court hearings, represents the department, and provides background information.
8. Tracks administrative action progress including non-payment of fines and takes appropriate action.
9. Provides training to Agricultural/Standards Inspectors on investigative techniques and legal procedures and terminology.

Non-Essential Functions:

1. Meets with industry representatives.
2. Reviews corrective action plans submitted by defendants.

■ KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

Knowledge of:

- Legal terminology and procedures; court procedures, arraignments, hearings, trials, and expert testimony.
- Civil and criminal court legal actions (summons, inspection warrants, abatement orders, subpoenas, bankruptcy claims, etc.) and administrative action hearings.
- Negotiation techniques.

- Inspection and investigation techniques.
- Agriculture, weights, and measures laws, regulations and ordinances pertaining to enforcement standards and compliance, control equipment, penalties, appeals, and settlement of violations.
- California Food and Agricultural Code, Code of Regulations, and Business and Professions Code.
- Telephone, office, and online etiquette.
- County customer service objectives and strategies.

Skills and Abilities to:

- Exercise appropriate judgment in answering questions and releasing information; analyze and project consequences of decisions and/or recommendations.
- Investigate violations of agriculture laws pertaining to agriculture, standards and compliance, and pesticide control equipment, penalties, appeals, and settlement of violations.
- Negotiate effectively to settle violations and draft the terms and conditions of settlement.
- Prepare legal documents such as summons, inspection warrants, abatement orders, subpoenas, search warrants and proposed decisions.
- Effectively communicate in oral and written form.
- Establish and maintain effective interpersonal and working relationships with those contacted during the course of work.
- Establish procedures to ensure timely processing of administrative civil penalty actions.
- Appropriately set priorities to meet fluctuating workload requirements.
- Communicate effectively with a variety of individuals representing diverse cultures and backgrounds and function calmly in situations, which require a high degree of sensitivity, tact and diplomacy.
- Treat County employees, representatives of outside agencies and members of the public with courtesy and respect.
- Assess the customer's immediate needs and ensure customer's receipt of needed services through personal service or referral.
- Provide prompt, efficient and responsive service.

■ EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE

Education, training, and/or experience that demonstrate possession of the knowledge, skills and abilities listed above. Examples of qualifying education/experience are:

1. A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university consisting of the successful completion of at least one year of major course work in agricultural and biological sciences, chemistry, physics, engineering, mathematics AND, two (2) years of professional experience performing research and investigation duties for a business, law firm, agricultural agency or court of law; OR
2. Graduation from an accredited law school.

Note: Related education and/or work experience performing professional agricultural inspection work is highly desirable and may substitute for part of the education/experience requirement stated above on a year-for-year basis.

■ ESSENTIAL PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

The physical characteristics described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of the classification. Reasonable accommodation may be made to enable an individual with qualified disabilities to perform the essential functions of a job, on a case-by-case basis.

Frequent: sitting and repetitive use of hands to operate computers, printers and copiers. Occasional: walking, standing, bending of neck and waist, squatting, climbing, twisting of neck and waist, simple grasping with hands, fine manipulation with hands, reaching above and below shoulder level, and lifting and carrying files weighing up to 10 pounds.

■ SPECIAL NOTES, LICENSES, OR REQUIREMENTS

License

A valid California class C driver's license, which must be maintained throughout employment in this class, is required at time of appointment, or the ability to arrange necessary and timely transportation for field travel. Employees in this class may be required to use their own vehicle.

Certification/Registration

None Required.

Working Conditions

Office environment; exposure to computer screens.

Background Investigation

Must have a reputation for honesty and trustworthiness. Misdemeanor and/or felony convictions may be disqualifying depending on type, number, severity, and recency. Prior to appointment, candidates will be subject to a background investigation.

Probationary Period

Incumbents appointed to permanent positions in this class shall serve a probationary period of 12 months (Civil Service Rule 4.2.5).

New: April 10, 1992
Revised: May 30, 1996
Revised: March 7, 2003
Reviewed: Spring 2003
Revised: May 21, 2004